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Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room.

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Talaŋa can keep his own counsel if need be.

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another.

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was

[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

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Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɔn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

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'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations, and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence. For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round knowledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observation brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so infrequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. Social Sphere of the Tale Child

The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsibilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs, it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.